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GOVERNOR PATRICK ANNOUNCES FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE
Local Communities Most Impacted By October Nor'easter to Receive Aid

FRAMINGHAM, MA - In response to Governor Deval Patrick's request of December 16, 2011 to President Barack Obama, federal disaster aid will be made available to Massachusetts communities to assist in their recovery from the October 29-30, 2011 Nor'easter.

"Once again, the Obama administration, through FEMA, has delivered for the people of Massachusetts," said Governor Patrick, "We appreciate the help with the cost of dealing with these natural disasters."

The assistance was authorized under a Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance (PA) issued by President Obama following a review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) analysis of Governor Patrick's request letter. The PA assistance will be made available to Middlesex, Worcester, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire and Berkshire County. These are the six Massachusetts counties, which had eligible costs that exceeded federal financial thresholds for storm-related damage.

The President has not yet acted on the Governor's requests for two additional counties, Essex and Norfolk; those requests are still under review/consideration. More specifically, the Governor asked that Public Assistance (PA) be provided for all of Norfolk County even though total costs, as estimated during preliminary damage assessments, fell slightly below the county's per capita threshold. With respect to Essex County, the Governor asked that Public Assistance be provided for certain cities and towns, but not the entire county (total estimated costs fell significantly below the county's per capita threshold.). FEMA reiterated that the President is still considering the Governor's requests for Norfolk and Essex Counties but did not want to hold up the process for the other 6 counties.

Under this Public Assistance Program, affected local governments, state agencies and various eligible private non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for federal funds to be reimbursed for 75% of the

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approved cost of protective measures, clearing debris from public roads and public property, and repairing, replacing or restoring damaged public facilities and infrastructure.

In addition, the counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire, who received record or near-record snowfall from this storm, as determined by the National Weather Service, also receive Snow Assistance, as part of the Public Assistance (PA) program. This PA program will reimburse cities and towns, state agencies and certain non-profit organizations for 75% of the cost of snow and ice removal from public roads for a 48-hour period.

"This funding can't come soon enough," Senator John Kerry said. "We've still got a lot of work to do to rebuild and recover after such severe storms, and I'm grateful to President Obama for hearing our call and getting our state the relief we need."

Senator Scott Brown said, "The October snowstorm was a tough and, in some cases, a tragic way to start the winter. While serious questions remain about the preparation and response time of the utility companies, this disaster assistance is good news and relieves our communities of some of the financial burdens of the recovery effort."

"This severe storm of historic proportions caused financial hardships and strained state and local resources," Congressman Edward J. Markey, dean of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation, said. "With this declaration, we can respond to the devastating impacts this storm had on Massachusetts and 7th District families and businesses. I am grateful to President Obama and Governor Patrick for their leadership and acting decisively to respond to this damaging storm."

"Massachusetts was once again hit with severe weather this fall," Congressman Stephen F. Lynch said. "This disaster declaration will assist communities as they continue to repair damage following the October snowstorm."

Procedures for requesting the assistance will be explained at a series of applicant briefings for local officials at locations to be announced shortly by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These briefings will explain the reimbursement process for receiving federal funds for eligible expenses incurred by state and local governments, as well as eligible non-profit organizations.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA and Flooding Issues, go to www.mass.gov/mema. Also, follow MEMA updates on *Facebook* and *Twitter*.